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## Prevention

### EFFICACY OF VARENICLINE THERAPY IN THE “BOARD THE BUS AND QUIT” SMOKING CESSATION PROGRAM: ONE YEAR RESULTS

ACC Moderated Poster Contributions

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**Background:** Tobacco control centers in most european countries are not yet available, this is particularly true for many regions in Italy. It would be important to set up effective smoking cessation programs complementary to those offered by the tobacco control centers .

**Methods:** A common city transportation bus was branded with the campaign logo and, in the last five days of May 2010, was placed in five different street or squares in downtown Genoa, Italy. Locations were chosen in no traffic zones in order to maximize the opportunity of meeting walking-by pedestrians. On board the bus, three smoking cessation experienced doctors and a nurse were available. The walking-by smokers were asked by two hostesses to exchange their empty cigarette box with a free cell-phone holder. Each smoker was then asked to board the bus and meet the staff to have informations about the opportunities of being supported in a quitting smoking attempt. If the bystander was interested in immediately starting a cessation program, the nurse measured the expired carbon monoxide and then gave each smoker the usual depression, anxiety and tobacco dependence scales forms. Finally one of the doctors interviewed each patient, scheduled a quitting date, and prescribed the appropriate drug therapy. If not controindicated, Varenicline 1mg BID was primarely chosen. A first group follow-up visit was also scheduled just before the quitting date and weekly follow-up visits were planned for the three months drug therapy period. Self reported abstinence was confirmed measuring an expired carbon monoxide < 5 PPM. Patients were then followed at 3, 9 and 12 months after the quit date.

**Results:** Among hundreds of smokers who asked for information, 297 accepted to enter the program and received a scheduled quit date and a drug prescription. 149 actually showed up at the first scheduled visit and followed the drug treatment prescription. Among the 149 prescriptions followers at three months 90 (60%) were abstinent. At 12 months 80 (53%) were still succesfully quitters

**Conclusions:** Varenicline treatment in a brief smoking cessation program with an intensive follow up schedule is highly effective.